



NEWS

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CHILDREN SAVED BY AMBER ALERTS

The California Highway Patrol (CHP), with law enforcement agencies across the country, will observe the 2009 National AMBER Alert Awareness Day on Tuesday, January 13.

The CHP is responsible for administration of the California Child Safety Amber Network, which includes statewide coordination of AMBER Alerts and other emergency alerting and information activities associated with child abduction. Additionally, the CHP is set to provide statewide training on the AMBER Alert Program to more than 600 California law enforcement agencies during the upcoming year. The AMBER Alert Program is a cooperative effort among local law enforcement agencies that investigate the child abductions and the CHP which helps them get the word out to the media and the public when an AMBER Alert is activated.

The AMBER Alert program was created in 2002 as a result of legislation by State Sen. George Runner, who at the time was an assemblymember. His bill, AB 415, established strict criteria for an AMBER Alert. Since its inception, there have been 136 AMBER Alert activations in the state, resulting in the safe recovery of 176 children. In 2008 alone, there were 24 AMBER Alerts in California, resulting in the safe recovery of 34 children.

The CHP and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) work closely together to keep our children safe. NCMEC and its public and private industry partners provide a multitude of services such as, Wireless AMBER Alert messaging, AMBER Alert Google Gadget, MySpace AMBER Alert notification, and Project Safekids.

California will mark the seven-year anniversary of its AMBER Alert program this summer.

“Sen. Runner and California’s leaders who helped implement the AMBER Alert Program can be very proud of its success in safely recovering abducted children. The success of the AMBER Alert program can also be attributed to coordination and training at every level, increased public awareness, technological advances, and cooperation among law enforcement, transportation officials, and the media,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow.

The AMBER Alert Program originated in Texas in 1996 after 9-year-old Amber Hagerman was abducted and murdered. Texas organized a system that encouraged law enforcement agencies to alert the media following a confirmed child abduction. AMBER Alert systems have been established in all 50 states.

For more on the AMBER Alert Program in California, visit the CHP’s website at www.chp.ca.gov.

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